



Mr. Liam Rattigan
Chairperson of the Governing Body
Athlone IT

Mr. Anthony Brazil,
Chairperson of the Governing Body
Limerick IT

5 May 2021

Dear Chairpersons,

I acknowledge receipt of the letter of 29 April 2021 made jointly on behalf of Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology and the representations made therein under section 34(3) of the Technological Universities Act 2018.

I note the positive post-advisory panel activities which the applicant institutes are progressing and, in particular, the continued engagement of external expert consultants to assist in the establishment of the technological university including in relation to research planning and socio-economic strategy, in recognition of cited recommendations of the advisory panel and the Higher Education Authority.

In this context, therefore, I am pleased to notify you in accordance with section 34(5) of the 2018 Act that my final decision is to grant the applicant institutes' application for designation as a technological university in accordance with section 34(4) (a) of the 2018 Act.

In relation to the name of the new technological university, I note that, following a comprehensive consultation process, the applicant institutes propose the name of Technological University of the Shannon: Athlone Limerick.

As set out in section 3 of the 2018 Act, a draft resolution of the order to be made under section 36 of the 2018 Act appointing a day for the establishment of the technological university, and specifying the name thereof in both the English and Irish languages, must be laid before, and passed by, each House of the Oireachtas. This provision will be implemented at the earliest opportunity in the legislative calendar subject to a decision being reached on an agreed appointed day.

In relation to the appointment of a first president for the new technological university, the applicant institutes should proceed now to initiate a process by way of open competition for the identification of a proposed suitable candidate or candidates such that I may consider making a designation to the post in accordance with the provisions of section 56 of the 2018 Act.



In relation to the appointment of the first governing body of the new university I have as Minister a prescribed role to perform under the 2018 Act. However, I would respectfully request that consideration be given in this important pre-establishment phase to finding a mechanism to ensure that an academic staff representative, a non-academic staff and a student union representative are included in an appropriate capacity such as would facilitate their attendance at meetings of the first governing body from its inception. This would very much ensure that the level of integration, partnership, collegiality and shared enthusiasm which was specifically remarked upon by the advisory panel and the Higher Education Authority in assessing the application for TU designation is maintained and strengthened in the crucial formative months of this the newest of higher education institutions. The First Schedule of the 2018 Act may provide an appropriate mechanism for consideration in this regard, or, alternatively, the approach adopted in January 2019 by TU Dublin might usefully be borne in mind. It is my intention to reiterate this request to the incoming first president designate in due course.

My officials will be in further contact with you in relation to any matter of detail or clarification required in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Harris T.D.,
Minister for Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science